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ABSTRACT

A group of three conference papers, all addressing the subject of effective programs to decrease the number of school dropouts, is presented in this document. The first paper, "Systemic Approaches to Reducing Dropouts" (Michael Timpane), asserts that dropping out is a symptom of failures in the social, economic, and educational systems. Dropping out is the anti-climactic conclusion of a long, visible, and painful process, and the dropout problem will continue to worsen. Approaches to reducing the number of dropouts are susgested. The second paper, "Reducing Dropouts through Community Promoted Initiatives" (Roger D. Mitchell), consolidates suggestions for reducing dropouts through community and business promoted initiatives developed by community task forces on education in Rochester, New York, and Flint, Michigan. The third paper, "Innovative Community Sponsored Projects" (Lori S. Orum), discusses community-based approaches to improve the educational status of Hispanics developed by the National Council of La Raza, such as the Academia del Pueblo, Project Success, Project Second Chance, Parents as Partners, and the Teacher Support Network. Current project activities in Kansas City, Missouri; Rochester, New York; Phoenix, Arizona; Houston, Texas; and Chicago, Illinois are discussed and activities in other areas are briefly summarized. (BJV)

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PROMISING PRACTICES

Reducing Dropouts

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PROMISING PRACTICES

Systemic Approaches to Reducing Dropouts

Michael Timpane
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There will be three points that will interweave through my remarks that strike me as overarching in talking about dropouts. One is that the act of dropping out is really a symtom or a symbol of shortcomings and failures in the social and economic and education systems.

The second point is that from the individual's point of view, and often from the school's point of view, dropping out is the anti-climactic conclusion of a long, visible, and painful process. There are few surprise actors in the tragedy of dropping out.

The third point is the point that Henry Levin made this morning--that is, for a series of profound and durable demographic and economic reasons, the issues represented by this symbol of dropping out are going to be with us for a very long time and, no doubt, in a more and more serious form.

I think that if we bear those three fundamentals in mind, we can have some chance to address the problems that dropping out stands for in our education system and in our society. If we do not, we may not.

In historical perspective, it is interesting to note that for the past ten to fifteen years, up until just a year or two ago, the issue of dropouts had virtually disappeared as an issue in education policy. It had a certain currency in the late `60's. There was a Dropout Prevention title in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and a series of demonstration projects funded by the Federal Government--and many manpower programs, such as the Job Corps and the Neighborhood Youth Corps, were aimed at the group of young people who were going to have trouble finishing school and making the transition to the rest of their lives. Attention to all of those problems and, indeed, to the problem itself waned greatly throughout the 1970's. It is not a strictly partisan phenomenon. I did

not locate it at the beginning of the Reagan administration; it goes further back. Why?

The most realistic analysis is that society, and especially the economy, could get along without the dropouts. To be sure, it was annoying that so many people were unqualified at the hiring desk, but at the bottom line, as employers are fond of saying, there was a labor surplus. One could "cream" the public schools, take the best of their graduates; one could recruit from private and parochial schools and take a great many of their graduates, and one could sit back and enjoy the influx for the first time of millions and millions of women returning to the labor market--and all this in the context of the baby boom passing through the entry years of the labor market. One could be worried about those whom the schools were failing, but not too worried--one's needs were satisfied.

This was always a shortsighted policy, because it ignored the economic costs of crime, welfare, unemployment, and the loss of productivity, not to mention the reduced earning power and quality of life of the individuals concerned. But it was nevertheless a pervasive policy. In the `80's, though, perceptions began to change, and precisely because all of the trends mentioned above began to reverse themselves. The baby boom ended; the increasing rate at which women were re-entering the labor market began to diminish. There were fewer young people, and the competition was greater. Institutions of higher education were, shall we say, adjusting their standards. The military was sustaining and expanding its appetite for young college graduates. All at once, potential labor shortages loomed. Employers began to conclude that from their self-interest (not altruism, not enlightened impulses toward social justice) they needed every single young person in our high schools to be well and adequately trained. Attention began to shift to those populations who are not being so well-trained, who are not so frequently completing high school with adequate skills, and who are over-represented among dropouts. So the issue is hot now--because, as is so often the case in education, society has needs. If education is swift and smart, education will respond to that need, because it is an appropriate and legitimate need, but in a way that builds and strengthens education itself. Education's objectives and society's objectives are coincident in a way that they have not been before. It is, then, a time of great and sustained opportunity, a time when there is great political and economic concern and strength behind us in dealing with dropouts.

This was, really, the latent message of the reports of the so-called excellence movement in the early `80's. The message was latent, and it is only as persons like yourselves have reexamined and reflected upon those reports and the imperative call for educational improvement that we have come to understand that true excellence in our schools is and must be deeply and profoundly equitable. If more excellence is needed, for whom is that greater excellence needed more than for those groups which have had the least of that excellence so far, namely, the minorities and the disadvantaged? We should continue to worry that the excellence movement may become a threat to equity, but I would argue, nevertheless, that it is also an opportunity. Strangely enough, no one understands this better that the business community. Indeed, the business community understands this better than many other sectors of our society, including some sectors of education, which ought to know better.

The neglect of a decade or more leaves us in some ways poorly prepared to make progress, to take advantage of the opportunity. The issue was largely ignored in educational research, as well as in the policy area. When the Teacher's College Record published a volume on dropouts a year ago, it was, to my knowledge, the first collection of fresh articles on the issue in perhaps fifteen years. There had been an article here and an article there, but this was the first time that any community of scholars had come together to develop a more-or-less comprehensive perspective on the issue. The consequence of this extended dearth of new thinking is that as we talk today about what we know and what is working, we speak about promise as much as about proof. We have many promising activities launched, but few have had time to be proven. There will be trial and error in what we do as a result of past neglect.

Secondly, the database on dropouts is a hopeless mess. I tried to review it in preparing for this talk today, and I came away confused and discouraged. I thought I knew what the dropout rate was. I thought I knew what a dropout rate was! I do not know what a dropout rate is any more, let alone what the dropout rate is. In New York City, the range of published opinion on the matter in the last six months goes from thirty-three to fifty-three percent, and these researchers are using fairly similar methodologies of cohort analysis, differing only in the details. It appears that the dropout rate may be between thirty-three and fifty-three percent in many cities, and most cities do not know which figure is closer to the fact.

There have been reports for fifteen years that the dropout rate is about twenty-five percent in the nation and holding steady, but now Chester Finn and others analyzing the 1980 census data report that among people twenty-five to twenty-nine years of age, only fourteen percent say they have not finished high school.

Locally, of course, the issue is more confused than at the national level. A recent survey of twenty-one cities found almost that many different methodologies for computing dropout rates. As a result, there was nothing to compare among cities, no benchmark one might look at. Rules concerning age, grade level, counting period, frequency of attendance, extended absence, student transfers, and attendance in alternative systems differ wildly. How could this happen? My answer is political: Mostly, because we did not care very much. If we had cared very much as a nation we would damn well know what the dropout rate was much more accurately than we do. If it were a profoundly important political issue at the local level, we would know more than we do. But the accurate analysis of dropout patterns was obviously not as important as trying to avoid blame for having a high dropout rate or trying to preserve state aid based on attendance figures--both of which seem to me, in my brief review of the literature, to be far more important determinants of how dropouts are counted than any analysis of the etiology of the dropout problem.

What do we know with some fair confidence about the most common patterns of dropping out? The pattern begins very early. It is most often observed in poor and minority families, those who are least well-prepared and have the lowest expectations and least support for the educational enterprise. It often includes a lack of early-childhood training, early school failure, sometimes culminating in holding back, and a pattern of falling farther and farther behind. It includes the development of low self-esteem and of a fatalistic outlook on the part of the student. Later, it includes truancy, absenteeism, in-school delinquency, and suspension. But one thing it does <u>not</u> include is lack of academic talent. I have never seen a dropout study that could find much difference in the range of academic talent between dropouts and any comparison group in the school and the community. That amounts to a double tragedy: we are producing incompetent people who could very well be highly competent.

As the point of dropping out approaches, the pattern seems to culminate for the student in active dislike for school, alienation from it, and rejection of it--all accompanied by "pushout," the significant collaboration of the school in the latter stages of the process. For some students who have been through this pattern, dropping out is the easiest thing they ever did in the school. They are welcomed into that central office as they have never been welcomed before, on that day when they come in to say that they are not going to grace this school with their presence anymore.

And finally, there is a decision to go to work or to the street, and, in the case of young women, there is very often pregnancy and motherhood.

During the past decade, the consequences of dropping out have been increasingly devastating, as it more and more conforms to the cycle of dependency for young families formed in this way, and as it becomes a more and more serious economic disaster for the young person who drops out. When Jerrold Bachman did one of the first modern studies of dropping out twenty years ago, he found many cases in which the dropouts, at least in the short run, did as well economically as similar young people who has stayed in school. By and large, those days are gone forever. Dropping out is now an economic disaster for the person who drops out. The unemployment rate is astronomical even as compared to high school graduates, let alone to people who might go on to college.

What can work against this pattern? There is much that is promising and has, in individual instances, worked to reduce dropouts. The litany would include:

- Good early childhood programs
- Smaller schools
- Alternative schools
- Summer programs
- Programs with a larger experiential base or component
- Bilingual programs
- Administrative steps that change the rules of re-entry to make it easier for students to return to school
- Programs that focus on teenage mothers

- Programs that focus on extended intensive counseling
- Programs that focus on collaborative efforts drawing on the business community and social service and community organization

All these approaches can work, and there seem to be instances in the literature in which they all do. But, considering the process I described earlier, many of these start late in the game. And in aggregate, the situation does not seem to improve much. We seem to have the problem encountered so often in education in which we can find hundreds of programs that work, and yet what we accomplish is to stand still at best. We cannot today say to ourselves that we have begun to make substantial inroads into the dropout problems in our nation or in our urban schools.

There is, then, a giant step yet to be taken. We must look beyond all special programs and projects for dropouts and begin to correct how the system as a whole works. And that, with all of the shortcomings of the excellence movement, is the fundamental insight of the education reforms proposed in the last four to five years. Look at the system itself rather than concentrating on improving this, that, or the other program which might correct this, or that, or the other aspect of the system. In looking at the system itself, the prescriptions are going to be the prescriptions heard this morning. We must give value to these students and their culture, both as individuals and as we construct the curriculum; the assumptions that these children bring to school are often remarkably different from the assumptions of the inherited curriculum in that school, and we must examine that right at the outset. We must understand and attend to their individual needs and talents and strengths which may not be packaged in the conventional categories upon which school success has been predicated. We must expect them to succeed academically. We must create a disciplined climate of encouragement and fairness in the schools--not authoritarian rules, but a disciplined environment that pushes and presses students toward achievement. We must design a system that gives individual schools and teaching professionals autonomy and resources to respond daringly to local needs; the difference of these local contexts cannot be under-estimated in constructing appropriate educational responses. And we must draw on the family and the community and business to work collaboratively with us. It is in the nature of the problem that no one institution is going to be able to solve it. And

we must not track or shunt off the problem to our Chapter I program or to our vocational education program or to our special education program or to our dropout program or to our alternative setting. Not that all of those do not have a role in the solution, but we must confront the issue in every ordinary school and ordinary classroom and begin to surmount it there, or we will not succeed in conquering it elsewhere.

We need, then, to be talking about programs that engage the whole school, a school that is open and reaching out to the community it serves, and drawing that community in rather than walling that community off, a high status place with high expectations. Only then will fewer students endure the extended agony and the dire consequences of dropping out.

PROMISING PRACTICES

Reducing Dropouts Through Community Promoted Initiatives

Roger D. Mitchell
The National Urban League

The issue of school dropouts is one that has been with us for a long time. It remains a subject of extensive research, debate, and handwringing among parents, teachers, local school administrators and national policy makers. By engaging in an ERIC search, one can acquire an extensive bibliography on the subject composed of citations of position papers, project descriptions, and research reports. Despite this growing body of literature, the dropout problem remains as a grim, constant reminder of a major failure in our multi-billion dollar education industry. A very positive element surrounding this issue is the continuing search for promising practices on reducing dropouts. The following discussion profiles two specific programs that indicate promise of contributing to the solution, while at the same time addressing much broader issues.

In 1985, the National Urban League launched a five year Education Initiative in response to the growing list of blatant inequities existing in the educational system. For Example:

- Black college enrollment has decreased 18% since its high point in 1976.
- Dropout rates from high school are two to three times greater for black students than for white students.
- The average child from a bottom quarter income family receives four fewer years of education than the child from a top quarter income family.
- Only half of the almost 10 million eligible students actually receive Chapter I compensatory education services.

With the launching of the Education Initiative the National Urban League continued and heightened its leadership in the effort to upgrade the quality of education for all students in general and for

black, poor and minority students in particular. Educational equity and excellence are the standards by which progress is assessed. Equity as now defined, holds that in addition to access, the educational system must provide a learning environment in which black and poor students are able to demonstrate results which are commensurate with those of white students. Equity of educational programs can be measured by outcomes, such as reduction in drop-out and push-out rates, improved attendance, improved retention rates of minorities in the four-year higher education programs, proportionate representation in programs for the gifted, reduction in the disproportionate representation of minority males in disciplinary actions, (such as suspensions and expulsions) and standardized test scores which more nearly approximate those of similar white populations.

A Nation At Risk asserts that "the twin goals of equity and high-quality schooling have profound and practical meaning for our economy and society, and we cannot permit one to yield to the other either in principle or in practice" (pg. 13). In pursuing these goals 90 of the 111 Urban League affiliates have designed education projects for black, minority and poor students in their service areas, aimed at overcoming their educational disadvantage, and providing access to higher education and employment.

Rochester, New York has an extraordinary program in operation. The Rochester Urban League continues its community-wide education initiative, begun in 1985, which now involves over 60 local organizations in school improvement. The nearly 600 persons involved have formed building-based projects implemented by numerous school action committees, each of which is a member of a city-wide steering committee.

Joining forces with the Center for Educational Development, the Rochester Urban League developed a community task force on education whose educational theme focused on the need:

- To involve parents more fully in their children's education and to improve communication between home and school.

- To involve pupils more fully in their own education.

- To encourage the professionalization of teaching.

- For pre-kindergarten education.

The task force's goal was "To engage the entire community in this initiative." Every segment of the community has an important role.

1. School-readiness was to be encouraged by city school district and community organization programs in parenting education, school/home coordination, and funding.

2. Parents, as the child's first teachers and continuing guardians, have vital roles in student health and motivation, and in supporting school activity and monitoring student progress.

3. Teachers, as "Professional partners of the education team," were urged toward further professionalization, while setting high quality educational goals for their students and cooperating with parents to accomplish those ends.

4. Business community commitment was sought to implement the recommendations of the Chamber of Commerce/Industrial Management Council Task Force. These included commitment to:

    - Provide job placement opportunities as incentives for student performance.

    - Join in partnerships between individual businesses and schools at every school building in the district.

    - Help market education, in order to raise community awareness and participation in schooling.

    - Provide opportunities to teachers and staff to help enhance teaching and school management skills.

5. Community groups were given three general recommendations:

- Make education a focus of all organizations.
- Provide reinforcement by community funding sources.
- Provide volunteer support for education.

6. Human Service Agencies were called upon to:
   - Be knowledgeable about public school achievement issues and concerns.
   - Make improvement of education achievement a priority in their work with parents and students.
   - Communicate the availability of their supportive services to educators and potential service consumers.

7. Cultural organizations play vital roles in providing arts that enhance student understanding of the world around them and help to build student self-esteem and personal development. Therefore they were urged to:
   - Establish collaborative educational plans for city school district students.
   - Enhance their services and make them known to this clientele.

8. Service organizations, including labor unions, veteran, fraternal, social and other organizations, also were urged to expand upon some of their current activities in support of education.

9. Religious institutions were asked to consider the many activities for youths, parents, and families that can help to ensure the background strengths on which the challenges of educational achievement rest.

10. Colleges and universities play a major role in the educational life of the community, beyond educating teachers and school administrators. Further staff

development, curricular consultation, and student motivation and training were cited as examples.

11. Libraries are important complements to the educational system, through access to their collections and through programming that helps students to understand ways in which learning fits them for the world around them.

12. The Department of Recreation and Community Services, through its athletic, arts and crafts programs for children and youth helps to reinforce values that enhance school performance. Complementary relationships between these programs and the school offerings increase the effectiveness of both.

As a result of the task force's "Call to Action," a phenomenal number of school-community partnerships were formed in a relatively short period of time - 13 months. A partial list includes:

- Deloitte, Haskins and Sells will be working with Monroe High School to introduce accounting as a viable career choice for minority students through speakers, field trips, and provision of materials.

- The Gift Center and Third Presbyterian Church are teaming up with School 6 to detail needs and develop complementary programs using volunteers and donations from the church.

- Monroe Community College's Educational Opportunity Program is working with a number of Monroe High School seniors who are at risk, in order to insure their graduation.

- NOBCCHE (National Organization for the Professional Development of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers) is continuing its award-winning joint science curriculum enrichment with School 2.

- University of Rochester helps sponsor the Career Beginnings Program, in which high school seniors get

summer jobs and meet with adult mentors during the school year.

School action committees across the city school district were formed last year by principals of the district's 45 schools and community volunteers, with support and organizational assistance from the Urban League of Rochester. The objectives of these groups were tailored to address the perceived needs of the various schools. They ranged from direct academic objectives such as improving reading and language skills, to providing tutoring, improving student attendance and reducing suspensions, improving school image and/or environment, and improving parent understanding and parent/community involvement and parent/school communication.

A unique aspect of the citywide education initiative is the effort being made to raise public awareness about the issues and the program. Hutchins/Young and Rubicam is the lead agency serving in partnership with the Education Task Force of the Advertising Council of Rochester in a communications campaign supporting quality education in Rochester. The focus of the communications effort is to reach students, parents, teachers and school administrators, community and business leaders, as well as the general public. As described by the campaign director:

- "First and foremost, there will be a common program identity.
- Second, there will be a theme for the general community and its segments that speaks to our shared responsibility to help kids learn.
- Third, we will establish a different theme for the kids that speaks their language, in terms they understand and will respond to.
- Fourth, all the messages will have a compelling emotional element to them.
- And finally, we will promote progress as it is made, to keep the momentum going."

It is clear that a major commitment has been made by all of the major segments of the Rochester community to effectuate change

in support of quality education. This commitment has been translated into action by many groups. The change has begun.

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The Urban League of Flint, Michigan has initiated a program to collaborate with local school districts and other educational institutions to improve academic achievement. The program, entitled Equal Results Educational Initiative, identified four components which address barriers to black educational achievement in Flint. These were identified by the "Think Tank Committee," a volunteer community based group of parents and educators who serve as an advisory board to the Educational Initiative. The components include:

1. PARENT ENRICHMENT - Focusing on assisting parents in becoming more effective advocates for their children by providing information on accessing the school system, preparing children to function equally and competitively with majority culture children, and providing parenting information on techniques that produce confident, disciplined, young people able to succeed in spite of barriers.

2. INCENTIVES FOR SUCCESS - A long term approach to providing comprehensive assistance to children out of school. Twenty (20) high risk seventh graders have been selected to participate in a six year educational enrichment program which will focus on overcoming individual barriers to their educational success. Participants who complete this program and successfully graduate from high school, will be rewarded scholarships to fund their post high school educations.

3. INCENTIVES FOR BLACK SCHOLARS - Seeks to encourage those black high school honor graduates who have demonstrated academic excellence by honoring all black high school graduates at a Black Scholars Awards Dinner.

In addition, efforts will be made to increase the number of black scholars by offering alternative guidance, support and scholarships so that each black scholar will be able to adequately finance post high school education.

4. CONFLICT RESOLUTION SCHOOL INITIATIVES - Focuses on reducing the number of black students suspended from school for fighting, by training students to be volunteer conflict managers within the schools. This will be an effort whereby the Urban League will work with school officials and parents seeking to use this alternative method of identified black reactive behavior that is hindering academic achievement.

Activities for all four program components were launched in January 1987. A number of program objectives have already been attained.

In the Parent Enrichment Component, parents of at-risk students entering middle school were chosen as the target population. A series of five one and one-half hour workshop modules were developed for use with participating parents. The modules were designed to:

- Highlight the complications involved in raising children today.
- Point out the predominate influence parents have in the lives of their children.
- Suggest methods to help parents positively influence their children's lives.

The five program modules were entitled:

1. Overview: Challenges of Parenting in the 80's.
2. Challenges of Early Adolescence.
3. Nurturing Self Concept.
4. Social Pressures of Early Adolescence.

5. Parent Involvement in Successful Academic Preparation.

Outside speakers were engaged to make presentations to the parents at each session. The five workshops were run over a seven week period, with twenty-one parents participating.

Most of the first five months work on the Incentives for Success component was spent on planning and start-up activities. The Incentives for Success Advisory Committee hosted a banquet for the twenty parents and students at Bryant Middle School with whom the committee will be working. Seven of those parents agreed to join the committee.

The Advisory Committee developed an Incentives for Success Statement of Commitment stating the program's objectives and identifying the comprehensive support services to be provided to student participants. Those included:

- Tutorial Services
- Mentors
- Crisis Intervention
- Cultural Enrichment
- Career Awareness
- Self Concept/Self Esteem Development
- Peer Support
- Manners and Morals Development

To formally engage parent participation and support for this program, a Parent Commitment Pledge was also developed for the parents or guardians of student participants to sign.

In May, the students, who are considered members of the Incentives for Success Club, and their parents and adult sponsors were special guests at the Flint Urban League's Salute to Black Scholars Banquet.

The stated goal of the third program component, Incentives for Black Scholars, is to recognize and support the academic achievements of black graduating high school students throughout Genesee County, thereby encouraging them to continue to achieve and influence younger students to emulate them and strive to graduate as black scholars. To attain this goal the program will:

Identify black high school seniors in the Flint area with very good and excellent grades.

Provide recognition for the achievement of those students earning cumulative 3.0 grade point averages by the third quarter of their senior year.

Provide motivation and information to students eligible to be black scholars. Over the course of their senior year, to further promote academic achievement, post-secondary education and career planning.

Track black scholars as they move through their educational and occupational careers, for record keeping and to provide a resource pool for the Urban League of Flint and the Community.

Provide financial assistance for the continuing education of eligible black high school seniors.

In February, the Black Scholars Incentives Subcommittee hosted an Orientation Rally for newly identified scholars. One hundred seventy-three letters were mailed to students identified by eleven school districts in the county as eligible to participate. Approximately 140 students and their parents attended the rally.

In May a Salute to Black Scholars Banquet was held honoring 114 students. Twenty organizations joined the Urban League in presenting scholarships to 73 students. Urban League administered scholarships totalling more than $50,000. In addition, each black scholar received a $50.00 United States Savings Bond.

A widely quoted statistic indicates that at high school levels, black students are suspended three times as often as white students. The Conflict Resolution School Initiative seeks to see that conflict mediation techniques are used in resolving conflicts with students instead of standard disciplinary measures, thus reducing the incidence of school suspension.

This component is patterned after "Justice Without Walls," a program sponsored by the Flint Human Relations Commission, which calls for disputants to discuss their problems and solve their differences before a panel trained in conflict resolution. While this program is aimed at helping resolve conflicts in the community, the Urban League's Conflict Resolution School Initiative specifically targets high school students.

For those wishing to serve as mediators the training is free and voluntary. Each trainee receives 20 hours of training in conflict mediation techniques, using a special training manual, video tape, and role playing in which the students practice the different roles involved in a conflict.

In the period January - May 1987, a total of 32 persons successfully completed training. These included 13 students, 9 school staff, 6 community volunteers and 4 which were unidentified as to group. There is a growing waiting list for the next round of training. In addition to the local training effort, the Flint Board of Education sent one of its staff persons to be trained as a trainer by Community Boards in Washington, DC. This person will assist the Urban League effort in training Flint Community School's students and staff during the summer.

Commenting on the Conflict Resolution Program, the Superintendent of the Beecher School District stated that the District is adopting the program because it will give students an alternative route to solve conflicts. He also said the program will definitely reduce suspensions, and he hopes students will use it in their lives.

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The two programs described above highlight the key elements of educational equity and excellence for the communities and students being served. The Rochester Program is unique in the scope of activities being conducted, in the broad base of community organization support and participation, and in the relatively short period of time it took to attain the current level of program activity. Likewise, the Flint program has quickly rallied community support and participation for its more focused agenda on parent and student support services.

Since both programs have been operating for less than a year, they have not had time to fully mature, or to generate sufficient data to be able to claim success in realizing educational change and

significant positive outcomes for disadvantaged students in their respective communities. What can be confidently stated is that these two programs, like a number of others being run by Urban League affiliates, represent promising practices that will not only impact on the dropout problem, but on the broader issue of educational equity and excellence.

PROMISING PRACTICES

Innovative Community Sponsored Projects

Lori S. Orum
The National Council of La Raza

Introduction

Over the last several years, the National Council of La Raza has been engaged in an effort to develop and demonstrate five innovative community-based approaches to improve the educational status of Hispanics. Three of the five projects are designed to address the school-age groups and special populations which both national research and local community experience indicate are among the most educationally "at-risk." The remaining two projects address the needs of parents and teachers, whose informed assistance is essential to improve educational outcomes for Hispanic children and youth. Support for initial program development efforts was provided primarily by a grant from the American Can Company Foundation. Further development and technical and evaluation assistance to local groups seeking to demonstrate the models has been supported by grants from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the AT&T Foundation.

There is an overwhelming need for community-based educational programs which can supplement school offerings and work with parents and teachers to increase their ability to help Hispanic children learn. Educational outcomes for Hispanics are well below those for other major U.S. subgroups, and current levels of local, state and federal resources devoted to improving the situation are inadequate. In addition, efforts which are solely remedial and not preventive in nature do not improve the education provided for the thousands of Hispanic children entering school each year. While the Council continues to work at the national level to advocate systemic reforms in teacher training, parent and adult education, effective school practices and programs, and appropriate programs for at-risk children, the Council also believes that much change can be effectively initiated through community-generated local projects.

The five models being demonstrated are:

- **The Academia del Pueblo,** which addresses the problems of early academic failure and grade retention faced by many Hispanic children in elementary school, by establishing after-school and summer "academies" to provide reinforcement and supplemental educational assistance to help children meet and exceed grade promotion requirements in elementary school;

- **Project Success,** which is designed to serve Hispanic youth in junior high schools to increase their high school completion and college entrance rates by providing them with academic enrichment, career and academic counseling and other special opportunities;

- **Project Second Chance,** which serves those youths who have already left school -- Hispanic dropouts -- and provides them with both education and counseling so that they can gain either a high school equivalency certificate or diploma;

- **Parents as Partners,** which recognizes that Hispanic parents are their children's most important teachers but often lack the necessary skills to help their children progress successfully through school, and provides training and assistance to parents so they can become active partners in their children's education;

- **The Teacher Support Network,** which brings community resources together to provide training and assistance to Hispanic teachers and other teachers working with Hispanic children so that those teachers may benefit from the latest educational research and curriculum and receive greater community support for their efforts.

Each of these projects is designed to be implemented by Hispanic community-based organizations, in cooperation with parents, schools, members of the business and corporate communities and other appropriate local organizations. The National Council of La Raza assists demonstration sites in securing resources to demonstrate the selected model project. The Council also provides

demonstration sites with the necessary training and technical assistance to implement the models, and monitors and evaluates the projects. Additionally, the Council facilitates the transfer of information among demonstration projects, so that the various projects can learn from each other's successes and errors.

II. Description of Models

A. The Academia del Pueblo

Early school failure has been shown to be perhaps the greatest predictor of a child's later dropping out of school, and at each grade level a higher percentage of Hispanic children are enrolled below grade level than are White children. According to the 1985 Current Population Survey, approximately 28.0% of Hispanic children in grades one through four were enrolled behind modal grade -- that is, the grade in which they would normally be expected to be enrolled given their age. The proportion below grade level rises to 39.5% among Hispanic children in grades five through eight, and 43.1% in grades nine and ten. A recent report from California indicates that **achievement** below grade level is even more widespread; 80% of Hispanic fluent-English speaking youngsters were reported to be performing below grade level by third grade.

The Academia del Pueblo is a community-based after-school and summer educational program designed to help elementary school-age children meet and/or exceed grade promotion requirements and thereby reduce the rate of school delay among Hispanic children. This program provides reading reinforcement and supplemental educational activities to help children master required skills and build upon what is taught in local schools. The concentration is on strengthening children's English language skills, especially reading and writing. It serves both English-fluent and limited-English proficient children, helping to assure that they receive the services needed to speak, understand, read and write English fluently.

The Academia also includes a Spanish language component, designed to build upon children's native language skills or to introduce Spanish as a second language. Depending upon local needs, including whether or not there is a bilingual program available in the local schools, Spanish may also be used as a language of instruction

for other subjects such as math and social studies. The Academia program for "at-risk" children is designed to meet for approximately two hours per day after school and to offer two-day and four-day programs, depending on the children's needs. While the general focus of the Academia is to provide enrichment and remedial educational support for at-risk children, the Academia may also offer programming for gifted children.

Each Academia is to create and nourish a three-way partnership between the Academia, parents and the cooperating local school(s). Each Academia operates in cooperation with selected local schools whose teachers -- with the permission of parents -- provide Academia staff with information on individual student progress, and work with the Academia to identify the individual needs of each student. In return, teachers are provided with quarterly reports from the Academia on student attendance and progress, and assistance in increasing parent participation in education. The Academia is also designed to utilize some public and/or private school teachers as after-school and summer Academia teachers, which further strengthens the school-Academia linkages.

Parent involvement is a critical part of the Academia model. There is a very slight charge for enrollment in the Academia (usually no more than $15.00 per session with a fee-waiver available), however, in order to enroll a child in the Academia program, parents must sign a cooperative learning plan in which they agree to:

- Establish household rules about homework and help their children comply with those rules;
- Review and sign the child's homework on a daily basis so the teacher knows that the parent has seen the homework;
- Help their children obtain a library card;
- Read to their child, or have their child read out loud to them for an individually-determined number of minutes per week; and
- Attend at least half the parent training seminars or meetings organized by the Academia.

The Academia provides a monthly seminar or training activity for parents, concentrating on teaching parents about child development and learning reinforcement techniques to use at home. The meetings are also used to provide parents with progress reports and information about their child's attendance and work at school and in the Academia.

The Academia staff may be composed of teachers, student teachers and interns from local colleges and universities, retired teachers and administrators, and high school honor students serving as peer tutors. However, there must be at least one lead teacher who is a fully credentialed and experienced classroom teacher. The student tutors are an especially important part of the Academia, since they not only provide instruction but also serve as role models for the children. Core Academia staff must be bilingual. The Academia must offer regular staff development seminars for all staff to discuss and demonstrate various teaching methods and new curricula, to share information on emerging educational research, and to facilitate the development of staff-initiated curricula and special programs. The Academia includes planning and staff development time as part of the teachers' paid time as staff are expected to work with the Academia director to develop and adjust programs and teaching strategies and to maintain frequent contact with parents and regular school teachers.

B. Project Success

Curricular tracking, which typically becomes formalized in junior high school, often causes Hispanic students to be placed in curricular programs which have no exit and no future. The curricular tracks that most Hispanic students are assigned to seem to increase the risk that they will leave school without a diploma or the skills necessary to be productive adults in competitive jobs. Dropout rates are far higher among youths in general education and vocational tracks than those in academic curricular tracks. Even when youth do successfully complete a vocational track, recent research indicates that most employers prefer workers who are fully literate and know how to learn other new skills, rather than those who are simply narrowly trained in a specific vocation or trade, which may be obsolete by the time the youth enters the labor market. While high quality vocational programs are a valid course for some students, many vocational programs do not meet that quality test. After extensive testimony on the out-datedness and

lack of academic skills taught in many vocational education programs, the federal government passed sweeping changes in the federal Vocational Education Act in 1984. However, those changes, where they are implemented, will take some time to trickle down to the local level, and will affect only vocational programs, not the "general" education tracks.

Thus, Hispanic students are disproportionately enrolled in curricular programs of questionable quality and usefulness. By their senior year in high school, three out of four Hispanic youths have been placed in tracks which make college enrollment unlikely. Over-enrollment in these tracks occurs in part because of routine tracking by counselors and teachers with low expectations for Hispanic children, and in part because Hispanic children and parents lack information about other options. Also, as a result of early school failures, many Hispanic junior high school and high school students are substantially below grade level in achievement and need supplemental tutoring and remediation to be able to participate successfully in academic classes. While Hispanic parents and students have high educational and occupational aspirations, both often lack information to make those dreams become reality.

Project Success is an after-school and summer program for at-risk junior and senior high school students, designed to help youths complete high school and become more informed about higher education and career options, and to increase the number of youths who enroll in and successfully complete academic high school curricular tracks. Project Success is designed to be implemented by community-based organizations in cooperation with junior high and middle schools serving students from the community organization's service area, and in collaboration with area colleges and universities where possible. Project Success is also designed to work cooperatively with local teachers, counselors and administrators.

The project is designed to recruit participants as seventh graders (or fifth and sixth graders in middle schools) and continue to work with these students throughout high school. Services are to be provided to a core group of 30 to 60 Hispanic seventh graders the first year, depending upon the capacity of the local demonstration site. In addition, the project can provide other, less intensive activities for other Hispanic students.

Because decisions about curriculum choice are often made in an information vacuum, many Project Success activities are designed to increase information about educational and career options, and give students the skills to make their high aspirations become reality. Other activities are designed to increase students' awareness of a wide variety of careers, especially those which may be outside their range of experience, including non-traditional entrepreneurial and professional careers.

However, merely providing students with better information and raising their sights to plan for new careers overlooks the fact that many Hispanic students have serious academic deficits by the time they reach junior high school. National data indicate that 39.5% of Hispanic youngsters in junior high school or middle school grades are already enrolled below expected grade level. Since Project Success is designed to work with "at-risk" youth, most project participants will need additional assistance to improve their academic performance. These students typically need not only remedial assistance in one or more subject areas, but also help in "learning how to learn."

Toward that end, one of the most critical components of Project Success is providing students with assistance in setting and meeting goals. Each student in the core group is assigned a Project Success counselor to work with the student and his or her parents, teachers and counselors to assess academic strengths and weaknesses, set short- and long-range academic goals and an individual "success" plan to achieve those goals and explore individual career and educational interests. These goals may include: changes in study habits, more regular attendance at school, more active classroom participation, improvement in grades, or seeking additional help from teachers at school. Project Success counselors monitor student progress toward meeting these individual goals on a monthly basis via meetings or telephone conversations with the student.

Project Success offers academically-oriented seminars and special mini-courses on such topics as de-mystifying algebra (a pre-algebra seminar), research and study skills, and effective test-taking techniques. Project Success also coordinates a tutorial resource bank, and recruits teachers, retired teachers, business persons and other community members to provide tutorial services to project students. Other Project Success activities may include "job shadowing" and internships to help students learn more about careers of interest, and

visits to local colleges and universities. Some Project Success sites use the Time to Read program, developed by Time, Inc., in conjunction with their volunteer banks as a reading improvement component of the program.

Parent participation is a central project goal, and is demonstrated both via parent participation in the scheduled parent seminars and by parents providing their children with academic reinforcement and monitoring at home. Because many parents of project participants have limited formal education, they often have difficulty in playing an active role in their children's education. Parent seminars seek to familiarize parents with school requirements and the outcomes of curricular tracking, and teahc ways in which parents can help their children "learn to learn" by reinforcing good time management, encouraging reading, and setting household rules for homework. The project also seeks to familiarize parents with their children's very real opportunities for college attendance, and helps provide motivation and support for participating youth.

Each Project Success site is to be staffed by a full-time project coordinator, one or more part-time counselors, and one or more part-time teachers or special tutors. Core project staff are to be bilingual and biliterate. Consultants may be identified or hired for special seminars or mini-courses. However, the project is designed to identify, coordinate, and tap existing and potential community resources, including local members of the business community, members of business and professional clubs and associations, local school, college and university resource persons, parents, and members of other community institutions. Thus, the project coordinator must serve as a community "bridge builder."

C Project Second Chance

Project Second Chance is a community-based educational program which provides Hispanic dropouts with a second opportunity to complete a high school education. While students drop out of high school for a variety of reasons, research has shown that many students who leave without diplomas report that they have few close relationships with caring adults at school. A large proportion report leaving because they have come to the conclusion -- often based on repeated school failure and low reading levels -- that "school is not for me." A significant number also leave school because they have other problems (especially teenage pregnancy,

parenting responsibilities or substance-abuse problems). These situations require special counseling and support services which are often unavailable in public high schools.

Project Second Chance is designed to address many dropouts' needs for counseling and support services to deal with special problems and responsibilities, provide closer relationships with caring adults, and academic instruction to help students gain the skills and confidence needed to succeed in school. Project Second Chance programs concentrate on providing students with three types of assistance:

- Academic instruction so that students may receive high school diplomas or GED certificates through the program, or instruction to help them "catch up" to return to high school;

- Opportunities to learn about and explore different careers and professions, and counseling to become aware of the planning and steps which must be taken in high school to enter the chosen field; and

- Assistance in developing the personal skills which will help students succeed in school, in the world of work and in their families.

In states where private, non-profit educational programs can be licensed or certified by the state to provide diplomas, Project Second Chance sites should endeavor to secure such status so that graduates of their educational programs may earn high school diplomas. Where appropriate, the project may also assist participating students -- especially younger dropouts -- to return to the public school system and complete an academic program leading to a diploma. For those students who do re-enter the public school, Project Second Chance may continue to provide counseling, supportive and tutorial services to help students succeed.

Instructional programs are based upon individual academic and language assessments, and use individual and small group counseling to set academic and career goals. Counselors provide students with the assistance and skills to evaluate their own progress and set new goals. Each student works with a counselor and their parents to develop an individual "success" plan which guides their work at Project Second Chance. Academic instruction may be

provided via a combination of individually-paced curricula, special, intensive "mini-courses" in selected subjects, or other instructional strategies. Where individually-paced or computerized instruction is used, the project must take care to provide other opportunities for student-teacher interaction, discussion, and development of critical thinking and analytical skills. Some use of cooperative learning techniques is strongly encouraged. Some Project Second Chance sites use the Time to Read program, developed by Time, Inc. as a reading improvement component. This program may be implemented by staff or volunteer tutors who are part of the project's volunteer bank.

Part of the Project Second Chance model is the use of volunteers to form a volunteer bank. Projects are encouraged to recruit volunteers from a wide cross-section of the community, and include individuals from a variety of career backgrounds. The volunteer bank may be used to provide additional, individualized tutoring to selected students, to pair students up with other "mentors" from the community, and/or to help students learn about careers. When the volunteer bank is used for career education, individuals are asked to make presentations about their careers and otherwise work with one or more students who are interested in that profession. This assistance may take the form of inviting students to their workplace to "shadow" the volunteer and observe his or her job first hand, providing tours, internships, summer or afterschool jobs, keeping in periodic touch with the student(s) to check on their school progress or help with subjects related to the field of interest, etc.

Project Second Chance may be operated as a component of an employment and training program, or as an independent educational program. It may also be appropriately used for an alternative high school setting serving dropouts or high risk youth.

D. Parents as Partners

While there is strong evidence that children whose parents are active partners in their education have higher educational outcomes than children whose parents assume a passive role, Hispanic parents often have great difficulty in being effective educational partners. High rates of English illiteracy among Hispanic adults tremendously limit their ability to help their own children learn to read, or to assess the quality of education that their children are receiving.

Additionally, at least half of Hispanic adults have had unsuccessful school experiences and often lack the skills to teach their children how to succeed in school. Unfortunately, few schools attempt to provide meaningful parent education which encompasses instruction in English language skills. Adult education programs are chronically underfunded relative to demand, and school-based parent involvement efforts too often focus on simply "encouraging" parents to become involved rather that "enabling" them to do so. Additionally, many activities which are labeled as "parent involvement" define such involvement rather narrowly, in terms of attendance at school advisory meetings or volunteering in classrooms. There is a tremendous need for comprehensive training programs which provide parents with an array of skills -- including English language skills where necessary -- to be effective partners in education.

The Parents as Partners project is designed to be operated either as a free-standing project, or as a component of another school or community-based educational program (such as the Academia del Pueblo, Project Success or Project Second Chance). Its purpose is to increase the effectiveness of parents as active partners by providing them with additional information about the schools and improved skills in effective parenting. The project builds and strengthens a three-way partnership among parents, the schools their children attend, and the greater community.

Each local Parents as Partners Project targets a particular school or schools and is staffed by a bilingual Program Coordinator responsible for program development and project monitoring. Training priorities are established by a project advisory network composed of participating parents, school personnel, representatives of the local business community and other community members. Where possible, programs establish linkages with universities and colleges to secure the assistance of experts in parent training, child development, techniques for teaching and learning at home, and family-life skills. Such a linkage also has the advantage of providing volunteer and internship opportunities for student teachers and practicums for other students working in relevant fields.

Three basic types of services may be offered, either alone or in confunction with each other:

- Training and follow-up assistance to help parents create a home environment which reinforces and expands children's learning;

- Training to help parents monitor their children's educational progress, become more effective participants on school advisory committees and better individual advocates for their children's educational rights, and for improvement of community schools; and

- Organization and support of a local Committee for Academic Excellence to provide a continuing forum for assessment and cooperative projects to improve educational opportunities in local schools.

Since parents are their children's first and most important teachers, the first type of project services is provided via a series of parent seminars and training sessions to improve effective parenting skills and help parents create a home environment which supports learning. Such seminars or mini-courses might include sessions on: child development and learning theory, language acquisition, effective parenting skills, effective discipline, communication and dispute resolution skills, and simple activities to reinforce reading or math skills at home. Seminars will be developed with input from participating parents and will draw upon available local resources. They will always be scheduled at a time which allows working and single parents to participate, and will include other relatives (grandparents, older siblings, etc.) who may have caretaker responsibilities. Project staff may be available to help parents design individual strategies or household rules, or to provide extra assistance in monitoring children's attendance and achievement at school.

In addition to teaching parents the skills to assist their individual children, the project may also elect to help parents increase their ability to understand and successfully interact with established school structures. Specific training priorities must be established by local communities based on needs assessments, but in most communities, training will need to be provided in

understanding the structure and functions of advisory committees, school governance and finance, understanding school budgets, legal rights of children, and effective advocacy strategies. Where school-based training programs provide such training, Parents as Partners staff will help parents to take advantage of these opportunities and learn to pass these skills on to others.

Long-range improvement in the quality of schooling for local children is also an important goal of the Parents as Partners project, although not every community may be immediately ready to implement this component of the project. Parents as Partners projects may organize and staff a local Committee for Academic Excellence, which meets monthly and provides participants with the training necessary to monitor and analyze educational opportunities for neighborhood children. The Committee exists to monitor students and school performance, identify problems and solutions, advocate for appropriate policies and programs, and assist the school in improving educational outcomes. Parents as Partners staff function as trainers and support staff for the Committee. The Committee should also work with the schools to design and support programs for school improvement. Some examples of recommended collaboration include: sponsoring community fund raisers to purchase additional equipment or special materials or securing their donation from area businesses; organization, training and coordination of a "volunteer bank" as a resource for classroom teachers; assistance in translating materials into Spanish; and assistance in teacher in-service training, especially regarding parent involvement and information on the local community and the cultures of its residents.

Because some parents lack full proficiency in English, training activities in all three areas should be available in both Spanish and English, but Parents as Partners staff may also work with parents to help them improve English skills. In some communities, the project may initiate English classes for parents; in others, it may refer parents to other available public or private courses. Some agencies may be able to help provide parent scholarships for private literacy or English-as-a-Second-Language courses.

E. Teacher Support Network

The Teacher Support Network is a community-based project to recognize the efforts and increase the effectiveness of public school teachers -- Hispanic and non-Hispanic -- working with Hispanic children, by providing them with additional resources, support, assistance and training. The Network's goal is to improve teacher-community relations and enhance the quality of education available to Hispanic children by strengthening the skills and broadening the knowledge of their teachers.

The Network may be coordinated by one or more local Hispanic community-based organizations. A vital project component is an advisory committee which includes parents, community-members, local business persons and corporate representatives, school administrators, teacher trainers, teachers and representatives of the local teacher association(s). Subject to local needs and resources, the Network may serve the staff or one neighborhood school, several selected schools, key groups of teachers or counselors, or -- in small districts -- the entire district teaching staff.

Network activities start with an assessment of perceived teacher needs. With the cooperation of local school officials, teachers in the target schools are surveyed to determine what they believe would make their jobs easier and would make them more effective teachers. Teachers are also polled to gather information on their knowledge about the Hispanic community and culture, their attitudes and expectations for Hispanic students, and their level of experience and comfort in teaching linguistically and culturally different children. Information on teacher language skills, academic background and previous inservice training is also collected. Parents and community leaders are also consulted during the assessment process.

Based on assessed needs and the level of community resources, the Teacher Support Network may undertake a variety of programs and activities, including:

- A newsletter for teachers with information on the community, summaries of recent national research, training opportunities and available resources, and recognition for outstanding teacher activities;

- Coordination of volunteer banks to provide teachers with extra classroom tutors, special guest speakers, translators for parent meetings, or "room parents" to help with parent involvement;

- Organization of a career exploration volunteer bank for students of participating teachers, staffed by volunteers from local businesses who provide internship or job shadowing opportunities for students;

- Coordination of special inservice training sessions for teachers on topics of high interest. Workshops may be offered in conjunction with district inservice training, in cooperation with a local university or professional association, or independently;

- Special teacher recognition programs to reward outstanding teachers;

- Mini-grants to teachers wishing to implement special projects to improve instruction or expand the opportunities available to Hispanic students; and/or

- Spanish improvement classes for teachers.

Participating teachers are re-surveyed at the end of the project year to assess differences in attitudes or behaviors over the year. Individual Networks may also wish to obtain parent assessments and gather pre- and post-project information on student performance to determine whether there are visible differences in student attendance and achievement over the life of the project, or between Network teachers and those not participating in the Network.

III. Current Project Activities

The National Council of La Raza is actively working to demonstrate and evaluate the program models developed through the Innovative Education Project. As of August 1987, work is underway in the following areas.

Kansas City Missouri

Council affiliate the Guadalupe Center began its demonstration of the Academia del Pueblo and the Parents as Partners Project in the Spring of 1986. Funding for the Academia has been provided through two grants from the Gannett Foundation; funding the first-year demonstration of the Parents as Partners Project was provided by the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation. The parent project is being continued the second year as a component of the Academia del Pueblo.

The Guadalupe Center Academia served approximately 80 children in kindergarten through fourth grade last year, and has more than 120 children enrolled in this summer session. The project serves children from more than six local public and private schools, who are transported to the Academia by the Center and taken home at the end of the day. Children attend either the Monday-Wednesday or Tuesday-Thursday session and receive supplemental reading lessons (according to need) for two and a half hours per day. The Academia has a small core group of trained teachers and makes extensive use of Hispanic high school honor students as tutors for the program. Parent activities are held once a month.

The project has a gained a good local reputation. Parents, teachers and students all report that they view the Academia as a help to participating children. Principals refer more children than the Center can currently serve. It appears that the Center will be able to tap local funds to support the Academia in the years ahead.

The National Council has assisted with program and staff development, provided training, and monitored and evaluated the program. Data from the first-year evaluation are currently being analyzed and the final evaluation readied. The Council is also working with the Guadalupe Center to prepare a replication manual for other communities wishing to implement the Academia del Pueblo.

Referrals of junior high and senior high students to the Academia have prompted the Center to initiate a new program this summer for at-risk children in the higher grades. Through the Innovative Education Project, the Center received subgrants from Time, Inc. and the Xerox Corporation to implement a summer reading improvement program, Time to Read. The program, developed by

Time, Inc., is helping approximately 20 junior and senior high school students improve their reading skills. High school tutors and teachers work with the students both individually and in small groups to strengthen reading skills. The program will be continued in the fall as a component of a more comprehensive program for at-risk junior and senior high school students to be initiated with funding from the Job Training Partnership Act.

Rochester, New York

Project Success is being implemented in Rochester, New York by the Hispanic Studies Project of the Rochester City Schools, with the assistance of a local community-based organization, Puerto Rican Youth Development. Project Success grew out of an Hispanic Studies Project initiated several years ago to study the quality of education available to Hispanic students in the Rochester schools. The resulting report -- the AHORA Report -- outlined a variety of interventions which the Steering Committee responsible for the project recommended that the district implement.

In the process of implementing those recommendations, Hispanic Studies Project staff contacted the Council for information on the model projects. Council staff provided a briefing on Project Success and conducted some training in Rochester, and the district approved funding to demonstrate Project Success in Rochester.

The project, funded entirely by the school system, began this spring when two curriculum specialists were hired to develop a special curriculum for Project Success students, designed to help students meet the specific grade promotion criteria in Rochester. The project began delivering services this summer in Rochester with the assistance of Puerto Rican Youth Development (PRYD), which has enrolled Project Success students in its summer day camp to supplement the half-day academic program provided by Project Success. The summer curriculum is developed around weekly day-long field trips, and combined academic instruction with career exploration. For example, a trip to a market might yield lessons on economics, accounting, computerized management systems, and language arts activities related to the subject at hand. In addition, students study the whole spectrum of jobs and careers associated with the running of a retail food market.

The Council will be involved in project evaluation activities and in helping to document the Rochester project to facilitate replication.

Phoenix, Arizona

Council affiliate Chicanos Por La Causa (CPLC) is working to demonstrate Project Success in Phoenix. This summer the project's reading component was initiated, using the Time to Read program developed by Time, Inc. The Council's Innovative Education Project was able to arrange the donation of the cost of the Time to Read program by Time, Inc. (approximately $12,000) and a grant of $5,000 from the Xerox Corporation to help CPLC initiate summer reading activities.

Comprehensive funding is being sought to implement the full Project Success this fall. The Project plans to serve 40 middle-school-age children from Silvestre Herrera School and provide them with supplemental instruction in reading, math and computer literacy, programs in career awareness, and seminars in personal development to help these youths make a successful transition to high school and increase their chances for success in college-preparatory curricular tracks. The program will also provide activities for parents.

Houston, Texas

In Houston, the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans (AAMA), a long-time Council affiliate, is demonstrating Project Second Chance. This summer, AAMA received subgrants from the Council from Time, Inc. and Xerox to initiate the Time to Read program, which will continue in the fall as a reading improvement component of Project Second Chance.

Comprehensive fundraising is currently underway to allow the full implementation of this model by fall. The AAMA Project Second Chance will be implemented through its George I. Sanchez Junior Senior High School, a Texas-accredited institution authorized to award high school diplomas. Participating students in this program will be those who have either dropped out or been excluded from junior or senior high school, and who have a record of disciplinary and academic problems. The program will provide extensive academic instruction, computer literacy courses, career exploration, personal development seminars, counseling and family activities.

The Spanish Speaking Unity Council in Oakland, California has also received subgrants to initiate the Time to Read program this summer. The Unity Council is serving some 15 youths this summer through the program, and is also concentrating on developing a cadre of trained volunteers, drawn extensively from the corporate sector, who will agree to work with Unity Council youth projects over the year. These volunteers will be used to implement the Time to Read program and to provide career awareness activities and tutoring in other subjects.

The National Council of La Raza is currently working with the Unity Council to develop a comprehensive youth project to be implemented early next year. Some adaptation of Project Success or Project Second Chance is the most likely project.

Chicago, Illinois

The National Council is working with two Hispanic community-based organizations in Chicago to demonstrate model projects. El Hogar del Nino, a child-serving agency serving the primarily Mexican-American Pilsen-Little Village neighborhoods, will demonstrate Project Success. Association House, serving a primarily Puerto Rican neighborhood, will implement the Teacher Support Network.

Comprehensive fundraising is currently being done for both projects. If pending funding proposals are approved, project activities may begin in mid-fall.

Other Cities and States

The Council is working with Hispanic community-based organizations in several other cities to adapt the models to local needs and develop fundraising plans. A new group, the Northwest Council of La Raza, is working with the Project Success model and has a tentative commitment from the schools in Portland, Oregon to demonstrate the project this fall. Image Youth Services, Inc. in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas is also working on Project Success and is tailoring the model and identifying potential funders. The United Community Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is working with the Academia del Pueblo model to flesh out a local program. The Hispanic Women's Council in Los Angeles is studying the program

models. It is very likely that we will begin actively fundraising for most of these programs this fall.

In addition, Council affiliates in a number of other cities have asked to demonstrate one or more of the models. Groups in the following cities have notified the Council of their desire to demonstrate models: Albuquerque, Boston, Denver, Detroit, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, North Platte Nebraska, Ogden, Utah, Phoenix, and San Diego. Statewide groups in California, Minnesota, New Mexico and Washington are also waiting for assistance. Enthusiasm for the Innovative Education Project is high and at times outstrips the ability of our small staff to respond, but these groups are all high priority and we hope to work with each later this year.